UNIVERSITY OF THE PUNJAB

JINNAH - IRWIN CORRESPONDENCE

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RESEARCH SOCIETY OF PAKISTAN

Jinnah-Irwin Correspondence

(1927-1930)

Edited by

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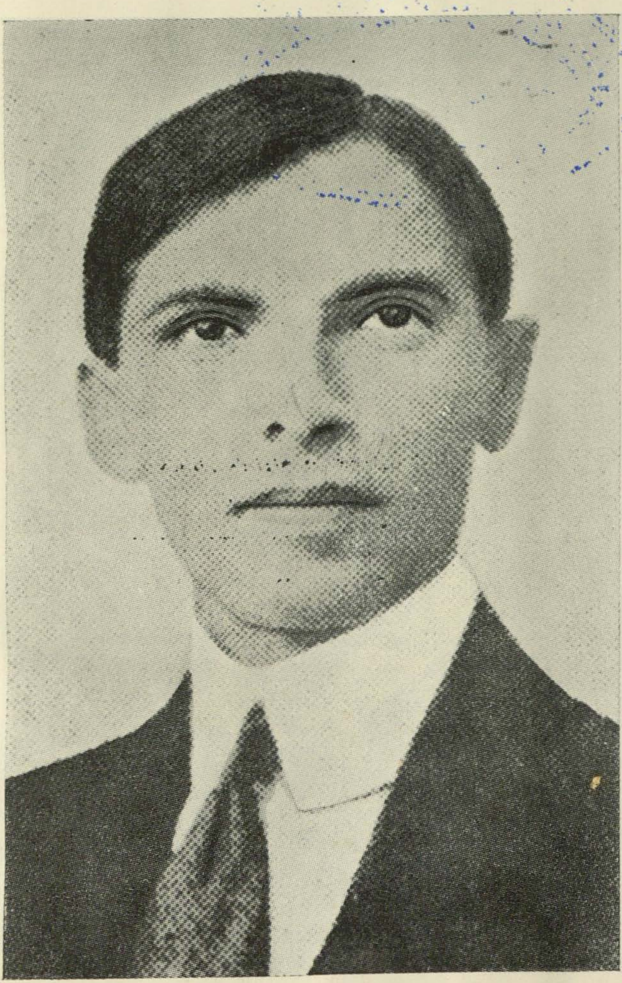
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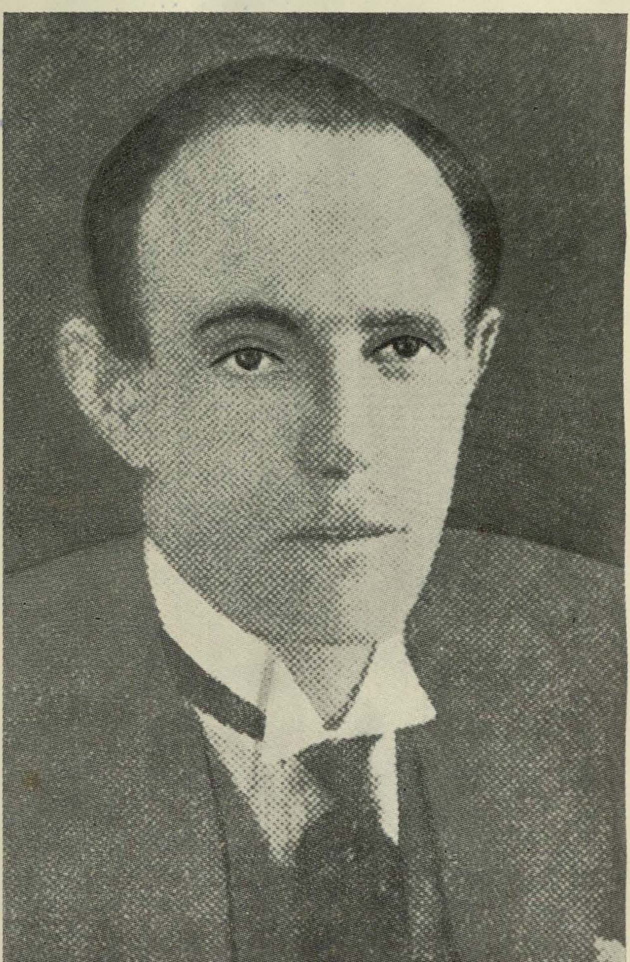
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QUAID-I-AZAM
Mohammad Ali Jinnah
(December 1928)



LORD IRWIN
(December 1928)

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FOREWORD

The Research Society of Pakistan has been from the beginning keenly interested in the publication of material relating to the Quaid-i-Azam. It has already published a selection of Quaid's (un-collected) speeches, statements and interviews of 1911—34 and 1947-48. Another volume of his speeches and statements is under active preparation.

The present volume contains Quaid's correspondence with Lord Irwin, the Viceroy of undivided India from 1926 to 1931, and other related material, as preserved in Lord Halifax's Collection in the India Office Library. These papers were traced by Mr. Waheed Ahmad, who obtained the permission of the authorities concerned and edited them for publication. The Society is grateful to him, as also to the present Lord Halifax for making this publication possible. The contents of this volume mainly cover the period of the Simon Commission and the First Round Table Conference. Its study throws light on a phase of Quaid's life which is generally considered as a period of suspended political activity. This correspondence will reveal that the Quaid did not remain idle even during this period, but was actively making constructive efforts to

remedy the ill-effects of an 'all-white' Royal Commission and have the political future of India determined at a Round Table Conference, where Indian opinion might be fully represented. The Quaid had two main objectives in life—to work for the independence of India and to safeguard Muslim interests.

The Society would welcome original material—*e.g.*, letters relating to Quaid and is prepared to pay for them, if necessary. It is hoped that it will receive the co-operation of all concerned.

(S. M. IKRAM)

I feel it a great privilege to introduce herewith the correspondence of two great men whom destiny had brought together to play their respective role at an important stage in the political development of modern India. The first personal contact between Lord Irwin[1] and Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah[2] seems to have taken place at the end of October 1927 in connection with the appointment of the Indian Statutory Commission. As the exchange of letters between the two, printed in this monograph, shows, this contact became closer after the historic statement by Irwin made on 31st October, 1929. The most striking feature of this correspondence is the confidence and trust that Irwin and Jinnah placed in each other despite the diametrically opposite political environments in which they had built up their respective political careers. Further, here one finds the two men appearing to differ

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1. Edward Frederick Lindley Wood (1881—1959): edc. Eton and Oxford; President of Board of Education, 1922—1924 and 1932—1935; Minister of Agriculture, 1924-1925; Viceroy of India, 1926—1931; cr. Baron Irwin, 1925; succeeded father as Viscount Halifax, 1934; Secretary for War, 1935; Lord Privy Seal, 1935—1937; Lord President of Council, 1937-1938; Foreign Secretary, 1938—1940; Member of War Cabinet, 1939—1945; Ambassador to United States, 1941—1946; cr. Earl, 1944.

2. B. 1876; ed. Karachi and Lincoln's Inn; called to the bar 1896; a leading barrister of the Bombay High Court; President of the Muslim League, 1916, 1920, 1924—1930 and from 1934 to his death; Quaid-i-Azam (great leader) of the Pakistan movement, 1940—1947; Governor-General of Pakistan, 1947-1948; d. 1948.

basically at the start, but ending in almost complete identity of thought and action. Irwin's regard for Jinnah as a leader of independent outlook, integrity and courage increased and with it Jinnah's warmth towards Irwin as the series proceeded. The tone of Jinnah's letters to Irwin changes from businesslike clarity to respect and finally to real warmth and affection, qualities which are not usually associated with the Quaid. The purpose of this introduction is to summarise the political background in which these letters were written. In this introduction an attempt is also made to trace Jinnah's political interest in India between 1932—1934, after his involuntary dissociation from the Round Table Conference, which has been generally ignored by writers on this period of Indian history. This will enable readers to make a better evaluation of this correspondence.

No other step taken by the imperial government during this century caused more resentment among Indians than the announcement of the personnel of the Simon Commission in November, 1927. This most unpopular incident happened during the period of Irwin's Indian viceroyalty. Almost all the Indian political parties[1] and their leaders denounced the exclusion of the Indians from the Commission and refused to offer their co-operation to it. As for Jinnah, his own experience of the Muddiman Committee had led him to attach importance to the status of the personnel of any Indian con-

1. The present writer will explain in future work the nature of the stand on the Simon Commission of the Muslim leaders of the Punjab to show that the attitude of the Muslims of this province was not helpful to the government and this frustrated their programme.

stitutional enquiry.[1] In one of his speeches in the Legislative Assembly in March 1926, in which he had asked the government to accelerate the appointment of the Statutory Commission for which provision had existed in the 1919 Act, he had 'made it quite clear' that 'the personnel of that Commission should be such as would satisfy the people'.[2] 'If you are going to appoint a Royal Commission', he said, 'it is no use appointing it unless you have a Commission which will command the confidence and the respect of the people'.[3] A week before the personnel of the Simon Commission was to be announced, Jinnah was invited by Irwin to a confidential interview to be informed of the decision of the government about the composition of the Commission. The following is Irwin's study of Jinnah's mood at this interview which he recorded in his personal note :

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1. As a result of the combined pressure exerted by Jinnah and the Swarajists in the Legislative Assembly, the government had set up a committee in 1924 to investigate the possibility of improvements within the existing Act in order to meet the Indian nationalist demand. The chairman of this committee was Sir A.P. Muddiman, then Home Member of the Government of India. This Muddiman Committee divided in its recommendations by 5 votes to 4 and produced two reports—a majority report and a minority report. The majority report, which was signed by A.P. Muddiman, Muhammad Shafi, B.C. Mahtab of Burdwan, A. H. Froom and H. Moncrieff-Smith, found the necessary scope for improvement within the Act. But the signatories to the minority report, Jinnah, Tej Bahadur Sapru, P.S. Sivaswamy Aiyer and R. P. Paranjpye, did not agree and rejected the existing Act outright. See Cmd. 2360, *Report of the Reforms Enquiry Committee* (1924).

   Later, Sir Muhammad Shafi, who had signed the majority report, gave an interview to the Associated Press in March 1925 in which he expressed views similar to those contained in the minority report of the Muddiman Committee. See *The Times of India* (Bombay), 14 March 1925 for the report of this interview. Thus the majority report, in effect, became the minority report and *vice versa*.
2. *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 11 March 1926, p. 2335.
3. Ibid.

> I had a long talk with Jinnah today. He listened very attentively and at the end said that he did not quite see what he had to say if the matter had been already decided. He then professed to dwell at some length upon the usual objections to the Commission being purely Parliamentary; that it savoured of the nature of a judicial inquest in which Indians were in the dock; that it was wounding the national pride and hurting to national sentiment. He feared that the resentment that would be created by the Parliamentary Commission would be such as to submerge the proposal about the Select Committee of the Legislature going home, a proposal which in itself he recognized to be of considerable constitutional value.
>
> We discussed the things generally on these lines for some time, but he did not give me any indication that he changed his view of the results he anticipated. He professed himself very gloomy as to the reception with which the announcement would meet.[1]

Irwin had already done enough in India, especially in his stirring appeals to the Indian leaders and by his efforts to bring about communal peace to command Jinnah's 'sincere respect and affection'.[2] Therefore, despite the gloom that Irwin had detected in Jinnah at the interview, Jinnah acted with restraint. During the week after the interview, Jinnah, on the one hand, urged Irwin to do his 'utmost and secure the

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1. See Irwin's note of interview with Jinnah of 31 October 1927. *Halifax Collection*, India Office Library (H.C., I.O.L), MSS. Eur. C. 152/29.
2. *Jinnah to Irwin*, 31 October 1927, H.C, I.O.L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/21, printed in this monograph.

inclusion of at least two Indians on the Commission',[1] and, on the other, publicly appealed, 'without disclosing any secret', to 'the leaders of all parties' in India to withhold 'expression of individual opinion committing the country in any way'.[2] He also called upon the Indian leaders to 'discuss jointly the terms of the proposals, after they have appeared in cold print, and determine upon a common policy of action'.[3] It was widely speculated in India then that the British Labour party would assert itself on the Indian side in this matter. The Labour Parliamentary party, in an official statement on the subject issued two days after the announcement, had asked 'Indian opinion to await the results of the debates in Parliament before finally deciding its attitude to the Commission'.[4] A leading British daily had also predicted 'a possible change in the Indian Commission'.[5] On 14 November 1927, *i.e.*, a week after the announcement of the Commission, Jinnah sent the following telegram to Fenner-Brockway of the Independent Labour Party in Britain:

> The exclusion of Indians from the Commission is fundamentally wrong. The amendments proposed so far and reported are equally impossible. No self-respecting and accredited representative of India would associate with or serve on the Commission unless invited on absolutely equal terms and with equal rights.

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1. Ibid.
2. See *The Times of India*, 8 November 1927.
3. Ibid.
4. See *The Times* (London), 10 November 1927.
5. See *The Manchester Guardian*, 15 November 1927.

> I appeal to the Labour party to demonstrate their sympathy with Indian feeling by action and in response to Indian public opinion at least to refuse to allow any member of their party to serve on Commission which excludes Indians and which is calculated to humiliate and wound the self-respect of the people of India.[1]

However, the Tory government ultimately succeeded in getting the necessary support of the Labour party in Parliament and on 26 November 1927, the Royal Warrant appointing the Commission was signed.[2] The next day, Jinnah, in a press interview, expressed his definite opinion that 'India cannot participate in this policy and share in the work of the Commission in any form at any stage, because it is a complete negation of India's status as partner'.[3] All the Indian newspapers of the next month are full of reports of Jinnah's massive efforts to create a public opinion in India against the proposed Commission and of his disagreement with a number of his prominent co-religionists in the Punjab. His activities had culminated in the following remarks in his presidential address at the Muslim League session in Calcutta on 1 January 1928:

> Constitutional war has been declared on Great Britain. Negotiations for a settlement are to come from our side. Let the Government sue for peace. We are denied equal partnership and we will resist the new doctrine to the best of our

1. See *The Times of India*, 15 November 1927 in which the text of this telegram is printed.
2. See Cmd. 3568, *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission* Vol. I-*Survey*, (1930), pp. xiii—xix.
3. See *The Times of India*, 28 November 1927.

> power. The Jallianwala Bagh was physical butchery. The Simon Commission is the butchery of our soul. By appointing an exclusively white Commission Lord Birkenhead has declared our unfitness for self-government. I welcome Pandit Malaviya and I welcome the hand of fellowship extended to us by the Hindu leaders from the platform of Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha. For to me this offer is more valuable than any concession which the British Government can make. Let us then grasp the hand of fellowship. This is indeed a bright day, and for achieving this duty our thanks are due to Lord Birkenhead.[1]

Having done all that he could do in India, Jinnah sailed for England in May 1928 accompanied by Srinivasa Iyengar, president of the Indian Congress at the time, and Dewan Chamanlal. He stayed there for six months. Irwin had been receiving reports from England about the efforts of Jinnah to influence the British Labour party and the India Office for the inclusion of Indian representatives on the Simon Commission.[2] But Jinnah returned to India in October 1928 without hope. In an interview that he gave to the representative of *The Times of India* on 26 October immediately after he had landed at Bombay, he warned his countrymen that 'it was the biggest folly' on their part 'to expect any substantial help from any one party in England' and that the 'one hope

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1. See *The Civil & Military Gazette* (Lahore), 4 January 1928.

2. See Simon to Irwin, 14 June 1828, H.C., I.O.L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/30 and Irwin to Birkenhead, 6 July 1928, H.C., I.O.L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/29.

for India' was 'unity between Hindus and Muslims'.[1] This was the time when the Indian leaders had become involved in another controversy over the Nehru Report which was published some time before Jinnah had arrived back in India.[2] In spite of this Report, Jinnah was not yet without hope of settling the communal question on a satisfactory basis, and immediately after his arrival he devoted his efforts towards achieving this purpose.

The Simon Commission arrived in India on 3 February 1928 on its first short visit of two months[3] in the teeth of strong Indian resentment. Three days later, Sir John Simon, the chairman of the Commission, wrote to the Viceroy suggesting the convocation of a 'Joint Free Conference' of the 'seven British Commissioners and a corresponding body of representatives chosen by the Indian Legislatures' for the purpose of hearing 'evidence' and examining 'material' which was to be placed before the Commission by 'the Government of India and the Local Government'.[4] But the Legislative Assembly, which had been the main platform for the expression of national sentiments ever since it was set up in 1921, rejected Simon's offer of the 'Joint Free Conference' in keeping with the general temper of the country. On 18 February 1928, the

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1. See *The Times of India*, 27 October 1928.

2. See All Parties Conference, *Report of Committee* (Allahabad, August, 1928).

3. The Simon Commission made two visits to India as follows : (*i*) 3 February-31 March 1928, (*ii*) 11 October 1928—13 April, 1929 See Cmd., 3568, op. cit., p. xvii.

4. Simon to Viceroy, 6 February 1928. Ibid. pp. xvii—xix.

Assembly resolved to have 'nothing to do with the Commission at any stage and in any form'.[1] This was the turning point for Irwin. With the Simon Commission hateful to the Indians and the possibility of Indian co-operation with it non-existent, Irwin saw the futility of standing firm on the existing Commission scheme. Now ignoring both imperial consideration and the mass of the bureaucratic suggestions coming to him, he decided to take the issue of the Indian reform into his own hands. But as yet he had no solution. He wrote in May 1928:

> Our politics here appear at the moment to be rather static. I should like to devise means for getting some of the more moderate boycotters back to work with Simon, but I don't easily see how this can be done in view of the definite fashion in which they have tied themselves in knots.[2]

However, in March 1928 Jinnah had already suggested to Irwin 'two ways' of resolving the difficulty—'one was by turning Simon's Commission into a Mixed Commission; and the other was by establishing a twin Indian Commission with parallel authority'.[3] Jinnah had offered to 'take the brunt of the attack in India' if either of his suggestions was accepted.[4] Irwin received a similar suggestion from Sir Chimanlal Setalvad

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1. See *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 18 February 1928, pp. 505-6.
2. Irwin to Marchioness of Salisbury, 25 May 1928, H.C., I. O. L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/18.
3. Irwin to Birkenhead, 15 March 1928, H. C., I. O. L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/29.
4. Ibid.

two and a half months later.[1] These suggestions heartened Irwin. He took them up with such vigour that he clashed violently with the Secretary of State for India, Lord Birkenhead. Birkenhead saw in these suggestions an undue Indian 'pressure' for concession which according to him, if conceded, would grow further.[2] On Irwin's insistence, the suggestions were placed before the British Cabinet by Birkenhead, but there the latter exerted his weight to secure the decision of the Cabinet against Irwin.[3] From now onward the scene of Irwin's political battle shifted from India to Britain. At this time, he found appeal in Birkenhead's proposal of his going home sometimes in the middle of 1929 as it would give him an 'opportunity' and an 'advantage' to talk to the people at home on the Indian question.[4] Birkenhead's resignation from the India Office in October 1928 removed one big difficulty for Irwin. In June 1929, just before he was to leave India for home on four months' leave, the Labour party came to power in Britain and Wedgwood Benn was appointed the Secretary of State for India. This further facilitated Irwin's task. His ideas had by now advanced much farther than the controversy over the personnel of the Simon Commission. He saw no use in the Commission or in the recommendations that it would make. He opened his heart to George R. Lane-Fox,

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1. Irwin to Birkenhead, 6 June 1928. Ibid.
2. Birkenhead to Irwin, 18 July 1928. Ibid.
3. Birkenhead to Irwin, 26 July 1928. Ibid.
4. Irwin to Geoffrey Dawson, 21 July 1928, H.C., I.O.L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/18.

who was a member of the Simon Commission and was related to Irwin's family :

> What really matters here more is what is going to be the political temper of India by the time you have finished and your work has to be put into operation. It is really worth a great deal to try and avoid having to launch any plans in a general atmosphere of hostility and resentment.[1]

Five months later he wrote:

> I feel more and more clearly myself that the effective choice of policy is going to lie between doing very little and doing something pretty substantial......There are ample justifications of course for the first, but I cannot resist the conclusion that its broad effect over years must be to drive Indian politics more and more to the left; whereas it seems to me that there is a chance that we might get an adequate amount of agreement on the lines of the second.[2]

Having made up his mind, Irwin set two aims before him. First, to restore confidence in the people of India in the purpose of Britain in India in keeping with the terms of the declaration of August 1917 made by Edwin Montagu, Secretary of State for India then, about the political status of India within the British empire. This confidence had suffered considerably as a result of the definition of a lower Indian status that Sir

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1. Irwin to George R. Lane-Fox, 26 June 1928. Ibid.
2. Irwin to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 29 November 1928. Ibid.

Malcolm Hailey, Home Member of Government of India, had given in that context in his speech in the Legislative Assembly in February 1924. Secondly, he wished to convoke a round table conference of representative Indians with their counterpart in Britain to work out the future Indian constitution in an atmosphere of harmony. The demand for such a conference had existed in India as early as 1922. It was asked for by the 'Conference of leaders' held in Bombay in the middle of January 1922 in order to solve the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs and discuss the demand of Swaraj[1]. Jinnah had taken a leading part at this Conference. A round table conference was also demanded in the resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly in February 1924.[2] Therefore, in the speech that he delivered in the Legislative Assembly early in 1929, Irwin hinted at the idea of such a conference after the Simon Commission had reported and made bold to reiterate the declaration of 1917 to dispel, in emphatic words, the doubts that had accumulated in Indian minds. These were some of his words:

> I tell this Assembly again, and through them India, that the declaration of 1917 stands, and will stand for all time as the solemn pledge of the British people to do all that can be done by one people to assist another to attain full national political stature, and that the pledge so given will never be dishonoured. And, as actions are commonly held more powerful than words,

1. See *The Times of India*, 16 January 1922.
2. *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 5 February 1924, p. 768.

> I will add that I should not be standing before you here today as Governor-General, if I believed that the British people had withdrawn their hand from that solemn covenant.[1]

Both these aims were likely to encounter stiff resistance from the upholders of the empire in Britain and, if they materialised, would side-track the Simon Commission. It would lengthen this introduction unduly if the efforts of Irwin that formed the background of his historic statement of 31 October 1929 were explained in full. It is enough to say that he was able successfully to secure the agreement of Simon to the widening of the scope of the Indian problem to include in it the Indian States as a means to justify the convening of a round table conference. He was also able to get the full support of the home government and the leader of his party Stanley Baldwin. In all these respects, Irwin was at his best. Here he had worked in coordination with Jinnah and the Hindu liberal leaders such as Setalvad and Sapru. Irwin had had a long personal talk with Jinnah in May 1929 before leaving India for England on leave to work for India at home.[2] During this talk, Jinnah had briefed Irwin fully on the idea of the conference.[3] On the eve of Irwin's departure for England the following month, Jinnah wrote a long letter to the British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, arguing the necessity of reiterating the

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1. Ibid., 28 January 1929, pp. 7-8.

2. Irwin to Geoffrey Dawson, 20 May 1929, H.C., I. O. L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/18.

3. Ibid.

pledge of dominion status and of convening a round table conference.[1] In his statement of 31 October 1929, Irwin was able to bring back both. Thus he gave to India all that Jinnah and men of his thinking had demanded and much more than any other Englishman was willing as well as capable of giving. For this Irwin was denounced by many prominent men of his party. But he had no regret for what he had done. He had become irrevocably convinced of the righteousness and inevitability of the course that Indian nationalism had taken. He desired for India a status in the British empire equal to that enjoyed by other dominions, justice in the conduct of relations between Britain and India and freedom of option for the Indian people. For all this, he spoke and wrote boldly and copiously. Few Englishmen and no other Viceroy of this century commanded as much respect from the Indian people as did Irwin. The trust and regard that Irwin and Jinnah entertained for each other can be seen in their correspondence in the following pages. It seems apt to end this part of the introduction by quoting Irwin from the speech that he delivered at the Chelmsford Club dinner at Delhi on 26 March, 1931, three weeks before his departure from India:

> There are those who see in the present movement and stirring of thought in India merely a movement engineered by a negligible minority, which ought never to have been allowed to attain its present importance, in that much of it is frankly seditious, and with firm Government could readily be suppressed. Therefore, the con-

1. This letter is dated 19 June 1929. Its text was published in *The Times of India*, 30 October 1929.

clusion is—let us have only firm Government and get back, as we rapidly shall, to the good old days of paternal administration, with populous markets reserved for British trade! That diagnosis I believe to be superficial, distorted and wholly divorced from reality. Great Britain will delude herself if she does not recognise that, beneath all the distinctions of community, class and social circumstances, there is a growing intellectual consciousness, or more truly self-consciousness, which is very closely akin to what we generally term nationalism. . . . No Englishman can, without being false to his own history, and in recent years to his own pledges, take objection to pursuit by others of their own political liberty; nor have I ever been able to appreciate the attitude of those who might be the first in Great Britain to exhort their countrymen only to buy British goods and yet would regard a movement for the encouragement of Swadeshi industry in India as something reprehensible and almost, if not quite, disloyal.[1]

Jinnah took it upon himself to make a success of the new policy that Irwin had brought from home in the form of the statement of 31 October 1929. Irwin had played his part; now it was Jinnah's turn. Liberal opinion in India was fully satisfied with Irwin's performance, but Gandhi and his Congress had yet to be reconciled. When Jinnah had met Irwin

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1. Government of India Press, *Speeches of Lord Irwin*, Vol. II, (Simla 1931), pp. 357-8.

in Bombay, immediately after the latter's return to India, to discuss the three matters of real importance—composition of the Conference, its date and the question of amnesty for political prisoners—Jinnah had been in 'direct and indirect communication with Gandhi' already.[1] From that time till 23 December 1929, Jinnah, in collaboration with Sapru, worked hard to bring about a meeting between the Viceroy and the Congress leaders.[2] Jinnah was hopeful about the outcome of such a meeting because, as a result of his interview with Gandhi early in December, 1929, he had found the latter reasonable.[3] The meeting eventually took place at the viceregal lodge on 23 December at which the participants were: Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Sapru, Vithalbhai Patel[4] and Jinnah, besides the Viceroy. Gandhi and Motilal appeared to the Viceroy to have come to the meeting, under the influence of the young men in the Congress, predetermined to wreck it.[5] At the meeting, these two Congress leaders demanded from the Viceroy, as the price of their participation in the Round Table Conference, 'a previous assurance' that the 'only purpose' of the Conference would be 'to consider the details of a Dominion Status constitution'.[6] It was not within the

1. Irwin to Sir James Crerar (Member of Viceroy's Council) 21 November 1929, H.C., I. O. L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/23.
2. Irwin himself gives the credit for the origin of the suggestion for this meeting to Jinnah and Sapru. See Viceroy to Governor of the Punjab (Telegram), 28 December 1929, H.C., I.O.L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/23.
3. Jinnah to Irwin, 3 December 1929. Ibid. printed in this monograph.
4. He was president of the Legislative Assembly at the time.
5. See Irwin to George R. Lane-Fox, 31 December, 1929, H.C., I.O.L. MSS. Eur. C. 152/18.
6. Irwin to Sir John Simon, 26 December 1929. Ibid.

authority of the Viceroy to give such an assurance even if he had desired to do so. Therefore, the meeting summarily failed. By Irwin's own account, 'Sapru, Jinnah and Patel were frankly disgusted' with the 'attitude' adopted at the meeting by Gandhi and Motilal.[1] Later, the Congress adopted their resolution of independence in Lahore at the end of the year, and in March, 1930 resorted to the civil disobedience movement. Sapru, in association with Jayakar, made another effort for peace between the Congress and the government. But Jinnah, having himself detected the influence of the youth on Gandhi and Motilal, did not see any good coming out of this effort, and, therefore, dissociated himself from it.[2] However, Jinnah was determined to make the best of the programme of the Round Table Conference and co-operate with the government when the government was co-operating with him. The short session of the Legislative Assembly which lasted for ten days in July 1930 (9 to 18 July) was almost Jinnah's own session. The deputy leader of his Independent party in the Assembly, Maulvi Muhammad Yakub was elected to be the president of the Assembly for this session,[3] Vithalbhai having resigned the office earlier.

The enthusiasm and preparation with which Jinnah proceeded to London to participate in the Round Table

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1. Ibid.

2. See Irwin to Wedgwood Benn, 10 July 1930, H.C., I. O. L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/6.

3 *Legislative Assembly Debates*, 9 July 1930, pp. 27—30. This election was conducted under the chairmanship of Jinnah in the house.

Conference can be seen in the letters published with this monograph. The proceedings of the Conference and Jinnah's role therein are recorded in the official reports and need not be recounted here. In the midst of the diehard attitude in Britain against Indian reform, the excessive demands of the Princes and the demonstration of communal disharmony at every step at the Conference, Jinnah's enthusiasm was dampened at the very beginning. He saw then how impossible it was for India either to attain dominion status or to achieve communal unity. By all accounts, he was an isolated and disgruntled figure at the Conference. This is how *The Manchester Guardian* wrote :

> Mr. Jinnah's position at the Round Table Conference was unique. The Hindus thought he was a Muslim communalist, the Muslims took him to be a pro-Hindu, the Princes deemed him to be too democratic. The Britishers considered him a rabid extremists with the result that he was everywhere but nowhere. None wanted him.[1]

Jinnah himself reflected on his role at the Conference in a public speech at Lahore in March 1936 :

> I displeased the Muslims. I displeased my Hindu friends because of the 'famous' 14 points. I displeased the Princes because I was deadly against their underhand activities and I displeased the British Parliament because I felt right from the beginning and I rebelled

1. Quoted in Joachin Alva, *Men and Supermen of Hindustan*, (Bombay, 1943), p. 226.

against it and said that it was all fraud. Within a few weeks I did not have a friend left there.[1]

Jinnah attended only the first two sessions of the Conference. The Third session of this Conference would not have taken place but for the strong stand taken by the Hindu liberal leaders of India, especially Sapru and Jayakar. Samuel Hoare, then Secretary of State for India, yielded to the pressure of these Indian liberals. But the selection of the Indian delegates to this session was carefully made so that only 'conservative' and 'provincial' outlooks would be represented this time. Jinnah stood no chance for selection at this session or for the Joint Parliamentary Committee. He was not even invited to give evidence before the Parliamentary Committee, while many Indians and Britons were asked to do so. However, there is no reason to doubt that Jinnah would have agreed to serve on the third session of the Conference and also to be a delegate to the Parliamentary Committee or be a witness before this Committee if an offer had been made to him by the government. After all, despite disappointments at the Conference, he did not withdraw himself from this reform work and worked till the end at both the sessions of the Conference.

Having been thus excluded from these constitutional discussions, Jinnah spent the major part of the years 1932—1934 in the political wilderness in England. With the constitutional discussions taking place in London, his stay in India during this time would not have served any political purpose. But he must have watched the trends of the London

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1. *The Civil & Military Gazette*, 3 March 1936.

discussions carefully. Soon after the publication of the White Paper on Indian Constitutional Reform in March 1933, he publicly expressed his views on this Paper in London.[1] Here he evaluated the proposals of this Paper for the political progress of India, criticised powers and functions of the Governor-General and provincial Governors and the 'numerous safeguards' contained in it and pointed out the difficulty in setting up the all-India federation under the scheme.[2] He concluded his statement with his following oft-repeated note:

> I am convinced that there is no hope for India without real and genuine Hindu-Muslim unity which can only be achieved by Hindus who are in a majority. There must be a real change of heart. It is then alone that India will command respect all over the world and her voice will become really effective. It is futile to expect important changes favourable to India from the Select Committee as long as India is divided.[3]

With an interval of two months during August and September 1933, the Joint Parliamentary Committee sat, in collaboration with the Indian delegates, and heard over 120 witnesses between June and November, 1933.[4] Among the persons

1. See *The Times of India* 22 March 1933 for the report of Jinnah's views on the White Paper.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. See H. L. 6 (I Part I) H.C. 5 (I Part I), Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform (Session 1933-34), Vol. I (Part I), *Report*, (1934), p. vii.

from Britain and India who tendered their evidence before the Committee and held extreme views were Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Winston Churchill and Dr. B.S. Moonje. The reports of much that was said by these witnesses must have increased Jinnah's frustration. He came to India in January 1934 in a gloomy mood. Speaking at a meeting held in his honour at Bombay on 20 January 1934 by the Bombay Muslim Students' Union under the chairmanship of M.C. Chagla, Jinnah expressed his inability 'to see any light' and asked his audience as to 'what is it that I can do ?'[1] He again lamented the absence of political harmony in India and repeated his plea for unity :

> There was not one crystallized object before the country to be presented before the British Government. There was not one organisation which could claim to speak for the united India, and there was not one leader behind whom the whole country was prepared to stand. Unless, therefore the leaders in the country forgot their differences and reviewed the situation afresh, there was "the danger of the White Paper being foisted on India"....Unless you forget your visions of the distant future and think of the immediate danger and unless you achieve unity, there is no hope, and the British Raj must control the essential departments of this country.[2]

1. See *The Times of India*, 22 January 1934.

2. Ibid. With the exception of the last sentence in this quotation, *The Times of India* had published a summarised version of the remarks of Jinnah at this meeting. This explains the frequent occurrance of the past tense in the quotation.

Before returning to England again, Jinnah stayed in India for four months from January to April 1934 during which time he worked hard to realise that unity which he had urged before the Muslim students of Bombay. On the initiative of the Aga Khan, who was also in India at this time, the split that had occurred in the Muslim League in 1927 was now finally repaired.[1] Thereupon, Jinnah announced his willingness to accept the office of the president of the Muslim League in February 1934.[2] Then, having finished with the preliminaries of the reorganization of the League, he made a bid to settle the communal question. He devised a 'new communal formula' under which he offered to the Hindus acceptance of separate electorates provided in the Communal Award 'for the present on the understanding that, after a period to be agreed upon, joint electorates are to be substituted for separate electorates'.[3] Negotiations between Jinnah and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya ensued immediately thereafter.[4] However, these negotiations broke down soon on the question of the representation of Muslims in the Punjab and Bengal provincial legislatures.[5] Jinnah issued a long statement in which he gave details of the negotiations with Pandit Malaviya and left India for England in April 1934.[6] The Report of the

1. See *The Times*, 17 February 1934 for this report.

2. Ibid.

3. See *The Times of India*, 5 April 1934.

4. Ibid .6 April 1934.

5. Ibid. 7 April 1934.

6. Ibid. for the text of Jinnah's statement.

Parliamentary Committee was published in November 1934. It was also the time when elections to the Legislative Assembly were held and Jinnah was elected to this Assembly unopposed from the Muhammadan Urban-Bombay City constituency.[1] He returned to India in December 1934[2] to resume his political activities at a time when the constitutional discussions in London had come to an end and the political scene had shifted from England to India.

Jinnah was neither a communalist nor a loyalist, nor did he believe in unconstitutional means to achieve his end. He wanted freedom for India from British rule and the protection of the rights of the Muslim minorities. He worked ceaselessly for both. He saw the attainment of freedom unlikely unless Hindus and Muslims united. For Hindu-Muslim unity he looked to the senior partner, the Hindus, who outnumbered the Muslims by three to one, to assure the Muslim minority that the rights of the latter would be safe in a self-governing India. He brought forward the demand of Pakistan only when he had become convinced that the safety of the Muslims of India lay in no other course.

Jinnah's methods and purpose can be seen in the preceding pages of this introduction and also in the correspondence to which this introduction is written. He shared with Irwin the qualities of character which the latter, in his letter to the

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1. See Cmd. 4939, *Return showing the results of the general election to the Legislative Assembly in India*, 1934, (1935).

2. See *The Times*, 27 December 1934 for the report of Jinnah's return to India.

prominent political leaders in Britain, ascribed to Jinnah.[1] These qualities Irwin himself possessed in an abundant measure. One aspect of Irwin's approach to the Indian problem has already been discussed in these pages. It will be appropriate to end by giving two extracts from Irwin's own words, leaving it to the reader to form his own opinion about the identity of thought and purpose which linked these two great men in their sense of justice for the minority communities and the necessity of settling the communal question to the satisfaction of the Muslim minority as a means of achieving Indian political advance:

> I. No political society can prosper or be at peace within itself, unless minorities included in it are reasonably satisfied with their conditions. Therefore, it is no answer to say that particular provisions that minorities deem essential for their interests are inimical to the evolution of Indian nationhood, for this ultimately depends upon a consideration for more fundamental, namely, the contentment of those who form a vital part of the whole society. And that is the end that must constantly be kept in view. Therefore, if, as I believe to be the case, there is a wide feeling of apprehension among minorities and if I may offer a word of personal advice, I would say that the only wise course for the majority community is frankly to recognise these apprehensions, unfounded though they may adjudge

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1. See Irwin to Stanley Baldwin etc., 13 September 1930, H.C., I. O. L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/19 and Irwin to Wedgwood Benn, 13 September 1930, H.C., I.O.L., MSS. Eur. C. 152/6.

them to be, and be prepared to give them the reassurance that they desire and claim until such time as, of their own free choice, minorities are with substantial unanimity prepared to let it go.[1]

II. It may be that as the final transfer of power from British to Indian hands was seen to be something actually happening at a fixed and not distant date, the demand for partition, so that each community might be completely assured of its own share of the transferred power, would always have been strongly pressed. The danger was never absent, and in the years rather further back during my own Viceroyalty I had constantly begged my Hindu friends to reflect upon what might not in this sphere be the power of a magnanimous proposal, generously made without measure and without reserve. If the Hindus had felt able to promise the Muslims any security for which they might have wished to ask—might it not have been, after ten or twenty years, which was nothing in the life of a nation, that the confidence between the two communities would have so grown that the need for such special provision would have disappeared ? As a matter of historical record, when one looks back over the last few years it is surprising how late in the story it was that partition

1. *Speeches of Lord Irwin*, op, cit., pd. 380-1.
This is an extract from the reply that Irwin gave to the farewell address from the Muslim community of Bombay on 16 April 1931. This was at the end of his viceroyalty. He sailed from Bombay two days later.

> emerged as a practical and pressing political proposition.[1]

I am deeply indebted to Lord Halifax for allowing me to publish these letters from his father's viceregal papers deposited at the India Office Library, where the Librarian and his staff have given me every assitance. Mr. T.L. Ingram, archivist, has helped me at all stages of the work. I am also grateful to Dr. S.M. Ikram, his colleagues and co-workers on the Research Society of Pakistan, University of the Punjab, Lahore, for arranging this publication.

WAHEED AHMAD
October 1968. Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge.

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1. The Earl of Halifax, *Fulness of Days*, (London, 1957), pp. 126-7.

1. M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Maiden's Hotel, Delhi.
31st October, 1927.

(Private and confidential)

My dear Lord Irwin,

After my interview with you today I have been revolving things over and over again in my mind, and I feel I must write a few lines, trusting you will not consider it presumptuous on my part to do so. Besides I feel all the more impelled to do it, as I have come to regard you, if I may say so, with sincere respect and affection, and therefore particularly I should not like any big move to be marred by a mistake during Your Excellency's regime, and with which your name may be associated. May I therefore most respectfully urge you, if it be possible even at this late stage, to do your utmost and secure the inclusion of at least two Indians on the Commission, who would command the confidence of political-minded Hindus and Musalmans? It would then sufficiently implement the scheme and with the Committee of the Central Legislature, who will examine the recommendations of the

1. *Halifax Collection*, Indian Office Library, MSS. Eur. C. 152/21.

Commission in consultation with the Joint Parliamentary Committee before the introduction of the Bill into Parliament, will win the support of the better mind of India.

I do hope that Your Excellency will give a serious thought to these few lines I have ventured to address. I have fully discussed the pros and cons and all the reasons, so it would be no use repeating them again here; but I sincerely hope yet that the situation may be saved.

With very kind regards,

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

2. M. A. Jinnah Esq., M.L.A.,
Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay.
3rd December, 1929.

Dear Lord Irwin,

This is just to inform Your Excellency that I have had a long interview with Mr. Gandhi, and Mr. Patel and his brother, Vallabhai, were present at the interview. I need not trouble you with details, but finally we came to the conclusion that it would be desirable if Your Excellency can meet the following gentlemen on the 23rd December at Delhi; Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. V.J. Patel (the President) and myself. It was arranged that Mr. Gandhi was to communicate with Pandit Motilal and obtain his assent and I was to write and obtain the assent of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. Accordingly, I am writing to Sir Tej Bahadur today. As soon as we obtain the consent of Pandit Motilal and Sir Tej Bahadur with regard to this course of action, Mr. Patel will write to Your Excellency requesting you to invite them to meet you at Delhi on the 23rd December. The draft of Mr. Patel's intended letter to Your Excellency

2. Ibid., MSS. Eur C. 152/23.

was settled between ourselves, and I trust Your Excellency will find it satisfactory when you receive it. I may tell Your Excellency that I am hopeful if such a meeting could take place and we can have a frank talk, because I left with the impression that Mr. Gandhi himself is reasonable.

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

3. M. A. Jinnah,
Member of the Legislative Assembly,
Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay,
14th December, 1929.

Dear Lord Irwin,

With reference to my previous letter, I understand that, before Pandit Motilal Nehru received the communication from Mr. Gandhi, an interview betweeen Your Excellency and Pandit Motilal was fixed up, and therefore it was considered unnecessary, at any rate for the present, to carry out the original idea, which I placed before Your Excellency (in my previous letter). Of course, I should like to know the result of the interview and await further development.

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

3. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/23.

4. TELEGRAM

M. A. Jinnah Esq., to Viceroy.

Telegram, Bombay, 20th December 1929.

Arriving Delhi, Sunday, Frontier Mail, Maiden's Hotel.

4. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/23.

5. M. A. Jinnah,
Member, Legislative Assembly.
March 4th, 1930.

Dear Lord Irwin,

Many thanks for your letter of the 3rd March 1930, I shall be glad to meet Sir George Rainy and Sir George Schuster as suggested by you; and it may help to a certain extent, but I think that having regard to the importance of the issue Your Excellency should step in before any final conclusions are arrived at by the Government of India, and if necessary meet the leading non-official members.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

5. *Halifax Collection*, India Office Library, MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

6. M. A. Jinnah, Esq.,
Member Legislative Assembly,
Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay.
April 5th, 1930.

(Private and confidential)

Dear Lord Irwin,

Since our talk when I again and again pressed Your Excellency that at any rate the date of the Conference should be fixed and announced without delay, I am getting more and more anxious about the announcement of the date. Please do not allow any further delay in the matter.

It will interest Your Excellency to read the editorial article which appeared in the *Daily Mail*, Bombay, which I enclose herewith. The latter part of the article you will observe runs on the same lines as I was urging upon you.

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

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6. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

7. M. A. Jinnah, Esq.,
Member, Legislative Assembly,
Circuit House, Sukkur.
April 26th, 1930.

(Private)

Dear Lord Irwin,

I received your letter of the 24th instant here today and I was glad to get the information. Of course you will remember that I was of opinion that the movement of civil disobedience was really serious, but it is made far more serious owing to delay and silence on the part of the Government all these months since the announcement was made in November last. Then came unfortunately the Tariff Bill. There is no other course except that you must get the move on and make the announcement as soon as you can. Of course I am pained to find that owing to delay, and silence, the country has got before it only one side of the question, which has received the greatest publicity and *ex parte* propaganda has gone on so long that at present it has reached fever heat, but Government alone can put the alternative before the people the and

7. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

sooner it is done the better. Sane and moderate people cannot deliver the goods. They can only offer counsel of perfection which will not go far to meet the situation.

I shall be the first to seize the opportunity and do all I can to condemn the methods which I have already disapproved on more than one occasion recently, provided there is a definite and clear alternative; for it is only then that it may prove effective. I am convinced that my country does not stand to gain by methods of those who follow the creed of civil disobedience. I have great faith in you, and I trust you, but you must move faster than you are going at present; and as a friend of India must move with the greatest caution in dealing with the situation which is both serious and unprecedented.

I am here for two or three weeks in connection with a professional engagement and it is not possible for me to do much from here except to wait and watch the events, but as soon as you make the announcement, I may be in a position to express my views and do what I can to help.

There is one important matter about which I want you to give me your considered views when we meet or before if you can. How far you would $\frac{\text{or}}{\text{and}}$ the Government of India would support constitutional advance.

I think that, unless you co-operate with the representatives of India, the Conference may break down. There must be some agreement at least between you and me as to what should be the utmost extent of advance which you would support. I trust you will understand me. The question now is not so much who goes to the Conference; but what will he bring?

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

8. M. A. Jinnah, Esq.,
Member, Legislative Assembly,
Circuit House, Sukkur.
May 20th, 1930.

(Private)

Dear Lord Irwin,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 13th instant for which I thank you.

I have carefully considered the question you put to me whether or not we should have a session of the Assembly in July and taking all the circumstances and the present situation jointly into my consideration I am inclined to say that no useful purpose will be served by holding or summoning the session in July. It would be far better if we now were to concentrate on the Conference and push it on as rapidly as possible. I am glad the date is fixed, though not as early as I had wished. As to other matters I shall talk to you when we meet which I hope may be very soon, Assembly or no Assembly. I think I shall get back to Bombay about the end of this month, and if

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8. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

it would suit you, I can run up to Simla for a few days in the first week of June. Please let me know if this will be convenient to you. More when we meet.

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

9. M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay
June 4th, 1930.

Dear Lord Irwin,

I have received your letter dated the 31st ultimo for which I thank you. I have noted that the Session of the Assembly will take place on the 7th July. Under these circumstances I have decided to postpone my visit to Simla unless there is anything that you wish to talk to me earlier. In that case please let me know and I can come up at any time that may suit you.

With regard to the question of elections I must confess that as the programme suggested by me could not be given effect to, and as the date for the Round Table Conference is now fixed for the 20th October, it does introduce elements which may require revision and reconsideration of the original idea; and of course you are the best judge under the circumstances. But still I am of opinion that the elections should be held after the Round Table Conference, if possible.

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

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9. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

10. M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay.
June 24th, 1930.

Dear Lord Irwin,

Many thanks for your letter. As far as I can see at present there is fundamental difference between the Government and those who are responsible for civil disobedience and there are too many people concerned as interveners and the matter has been stirred up too much. Under these circumstances I do not think there is much hope for any adjustment at present unless the Government are prepared to yield. However I hope that I may be able to put something concrete before you when I come to Simla for the Assembly sessions.

I am very anxious that the names of the representatives who are going to be invited to the Conference should not be published till the end of August or the beginning of September and I may request you to let me see the list of the invitees before you finally decide upon the names,

10. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

so that I may be in a position to make such suggestions as it may strike me.

Of course it will be for you ultimately to decide who should be invited. This can be done while I am at Simla.

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

11. M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay.
August 6th, 1930.

Dear Lord Irwin,

I thank you for your letter of the 28th July, 1930 and regret very much to say that I cannot agree with you that the inclusion of the representatives of the Opposition Parties is all to our advantage. I can enumerate many disadvantages in their being included in the Conference; and, whatever may have been the intentions of His Majesty's Government, I must say that it is a departure from the terms of the announcement. I do not think you will blame me if I say that a change or a departure of this kind made so suddenly and within such a short time after the solemn declaration must go to shake one's faith. However it is there now and let us hope that it is for the best as you have reasoned it out in your letter.

May I once more urge you not to forget the suggestion I made in the course of our conversation at Simla that Your Excellency should do your utmost to arrange and be present in London at the time of the Conference? I am more anxious and more convinced than ever that it is absolutely essential to the success of the Conference.

11. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

I confess I have often been disappointed at the events that have taken place and many things that have happened since the announcement, but at the same time I realise that you have done your best, although not one of my suggestions has been completely adopted.

May I once more ask you to try earnestly and do your best to be present at the London Conference? I sincerely pray that you will succeed in your efforts. You do not know what relief it will give me when I hear that you have succeeded. I feel that it will be more than half the battle and it will certainly fill me with the hope that then there is every reasonable chance of success.

With regard to the names of the representatives of British India, I suppose it will depend upon whether the Congress comes or not, but apart from the Congress the numbers and the names shown to me by Your Excellency struck me as much too large and some of the names may well be omitted. I still hold that the smaller the number the better and I have once before pointed out that it all depends upon what the British are prepared to give or concede and not so much upon who goes or the number. I have spoken my mind very frankly to Your Excellency as to what would satisfy the nationalists in India, of course

subject to the settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question.

I was looking forward to seeing that the arrangement that was arrived at between the Government and the leading men who met Mr. Howell, Sir Fazl-i-Husain and Mr. Haig would be given effect to, but, beyond the report in the newspapers that some 187 persons were released, nothing more is known and on the contrary I learn that two prominent men have been recently arrested, namely Mian Jaffer Shah Kaka-Khel and Abdulla Shah, and I have not seen any communique issued by the Government of India as arranged. In this connection I may mention that Abdul Gaffoor Khan whose release was most essential is still a prisoner.

With regard to the representatives of the North-West Frontier Province to the London Conference, Your Excellency asked me to suggest the names, so I made careful enquiries and the two names that are being pressed from every direction are Mr. Ahmad Shah, Barrister-at-Law, and Abdul Gaffoor Khan; the last name is well-known to Your Excellency but has no or very little knowledge of English Language.

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

12. M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay.
August 19th, 1930.

Dear Lord Irwin,

I thank you very much for your letter of 11th August. I am extremely sorry that there is very little chance as things are shaping to enable you to go to London for the Conference.

I wonder whether it is possible to know when you are going to issue the invitations and how soon you think you will be able to announce the names of the representatives. I am waiting to hear from you as I have to make my arrangements accordingly. If possible I should like to leave Bombay on or about the 6th of September. There is a great deal of confusion in the public mind again as regards the date of the Conference owing to the Sapru-Jayakar move and the meeting of the Gandhi-Nehru at Yervada.

As regards the efforts for peace, I am sorry to hear that you feel that chances of any success in that direction are remote. You know I am always for peace and there-

12. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

fore if anything I encouraged the efforts although I have all along impressed upon you that the gulf is too great to be bridged in the manner you desire. It seems to me that, unless you are prepared to depart from the fundamental principles underlying the November announcement, there is no chance of placating the Congress. You repeatedly and clearly stated to me that that was not possible. Now let me impress upon you one thing that, if you are prepared to yield, please do it at once. The suspense and delay is doing a great deal of harm and creating a wrong impression. If, on the other hand, you are not prepared or that you are unable to go beyond the terms of the announcement, be firm and definite and do not allow any misunderstanding to continue, for all the good work that was done after your speech of the 9th July and the leaders' statement that was issued from Simla will suffer enormously.

Just imagine there are only two months left before the date of the Conference and yet even the invitations have not gone out. We must go ahead with the Conference programme.

I do recognise that your presence in India while the Conference is going on in London will be of the utmost

importance, as you expect that during the Conference frequent references will be necessary to the Government of India. But nevertheless I would have preferred your presence in London.

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

P.S.

May I request you to give me some introductions to people whom you would like me to meet ? Particularly I should like a letter to Mr. Baldwin.

M. A. J.

13. M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay.
August 29th, 1930.

Dear Lord Irwin,

I thank you very much for your letter of the 23rd August. With regard to the letters of introduction I leave it to you to make selection and send them to me as soon as you can.

I had intended to leave on the 6th September, but I feel that, unless I know definitely the result of your talk with Sapru and Jayakar and unless I know finally that the Conference will take place in the second week of November, it would not be advisable for me to leave; also I should like to know finally the names of the representatives of British India.

May I bring it to your notice again that the delay in the publication of the result of the peace talk is having a most disastrous effect on the public mind; and further the London newspapers and the reactionaries in England and India are advocating the withdrawal of the offer of Conference which is believed by many? Under the circumstances, the Conference idea is again getting into the background more and more. Please therefore do not allow

13. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

further any suspense, but take the earliest opportunity of officially contradicting such rumours and issue an authoritative statement regarding the result of peace talk and the names of the representatives.

Repression without clarifying the situation must bring more and more support to the Congress, as a large body of people must respond to the Congress call believing that through the efforts of Congress, Government are already forced to sue for peace and therefore by rallying round the Congress for a little while more and making further sacrifices they will finally force the hands of the Government to surrender. Knowing as I do your mind the situation is tragic and almost cruel.

Whereas those who have supported the Conference idea hitherto are somewhat disturbed by the uncertainty created by the present situation. I thought I would draw your attention to these matters, although I am sure there is nothing new which I may tell you. I have booked my passage by the 13th September, 1930 provisionally, and I hope before that I shall know how the land lies.

Yours very sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

14. M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
High Court, Bombay.
September 9th, 1930.

Dear Lord Irwin,

I am in receipt of yours of the 1st September, 1930 and I thank you very much for it.

This is just to inform you that I am going to Sindh on a professional engagement tonight and shall return to Bombay on the 18th or 19th. I have now booked my passage for the 4th October in view of the fact that the Conference does not meet till the middle of November. More when I return.

Yours very sincerely,

M.A. JINNAH

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14. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

15. Viceregal Lodge,
Delhi.
1st November, 1927.

(Confidential)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you very much for your note. I am grateful to you for writing and for what you say.

Though I can assure you that everything you said yesterday had been very fully weighed, I have given careful thought again to your suggestions.

I fear though that it is scarcely feasible at this stage to do what you would wish; and indeed though I fully appreciate the force of the objection that may be taken to the P.C. *per se*, I am not sure that I feel as confident as you that our path would be smoothed, even if it were possible to act upon your suggestion.

But of course this is surmise, and may be wrong, and I still hope that when Indian opinion is able to weigh the whole scheme together, they may be disposed to attach greater importance than you at present anticipate to the

15. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/21.

establishment of that contact between the British Parliament and the Indian Legislature. To my mind this, if it takes shape, will stand in history as a new and powerful constitutional precedent — a convention which may well exercise an influence in the future development of Anglo-Indian relations of a very far-reaching character.

Yours sincerely,

IRWIN

16. Sir Darcy Lindsay, Kt., C.B.E., Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Kt., C.S.I.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Member of the Legislative Assembly.

M.A. Jinnah, Esq., Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Viceroy's House,
New Delhi.
March 3rd, 1930.

(Private and confidential)

My dear____________,

I have been giving careful thought to the wider issues involved in the Government's proposals for the special protective measures in regard to cotton piece-goods; and I am particularly anxious, first, that these proposals should receive a fair consideration on their merits, and, secondly, that the representatives of the unofficial parties should have the fullest opportunity to get to understand the technical aspects of the question on the Government's reasons for putting forward proposals in this particular form.

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16. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

At the same time I feel sure that you will agree with me that it would be most unfortunate if any public utterances were made by important political speakers which might exacerbate public opinion either here or in England before there has been time fully to appreciate all the bearings of the proposals.

These considerations lead me to suggest to you that it would be in the public interest if the special question of the protective duties was to be kept out of the general discussion on the budget on March 4th and 5th. This question has in point of fact no connection with the general budget proposals and does not appreciably affect the financial results of those proposals. (It might, in this connection, interest you to know that the actual financial result of the protective proposals is estimated to be a slight diminution in revenue — owing to their protective effect — as compared with that of a 15 per cent import duty standing alone.)

The more convenient occasion for debating the protective proposals might perhaps be connected with the special Cotton Duties Bill which has been introduced by Sir George Rainy.

If this view is accepted, I suggest that it would be valuable, as a preliminary to the debate in the Assembly

that a full and frank discussion should take place privately between a few selected representatives of the unofficial parties and the two Members of the Government who are chiefly concerned, *i.e.*, the Commerce and Finance Members. Should this course commend itself to you, I will instruct Sir George Rainy and Sir George Schuster to arrange with you for a meeting at the earliest possible opportunity.

I trust that you will give this letter your very careful consideration, believing as I do that you are no less concerned than I am about the larger issues which are now concerning us.

Yours sincerely,

IRWIN

17. To M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay.

(Private and confidential)

Viceroy's Camp,
April 10th, 1930.

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you very much for your letter of 5th April and the cutting, which I read with interest. I will not forget what you said to me about the importance of an early announcement. I fully realise the force of argument on that side.

Yours sincerely,

IRWIN

17. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

18. To M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
C/o The City Magistrate's
Court, Sukkur, Sind.

Viceregal Lodge, Simla.

April 24th, 1930.

(Secret)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Since I saw you last I have been in communication with the Secretary of State about the date of the Conference, and though a definite decision has not yet been arrived at, I have good hopes that the Conference will be convened in London about second or third week of October. I hope that it will shortly be possible to make an announcement to this effect. You will in the meantime of course keep this information strictly confidential.

I have just been writing to Sapru saying that I should have thought that sane and moderate people like himself ought to be able to find an opportunity of coming out strongly with a statement condemning the methods of those who follow the creed of civil disobedience. Do you feel that you yourself could do anything on these lines?

Yours very sincerely,

IRWIN

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18. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

19. Viceroy to M.A. Jinnah, Mount Pleasant Road, Malabar Hill, Bombay.

Telegram, 24th May, 1930.

No. 66–S.T. Your letter May 20th. Very pleased to see you whenever you come Simla.

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19. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

20. To M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Viceregal Lodge, Simla.
June 17th, 1930.

(Private)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

I have been thinking over the conversation we had the other day about the future of constitutional reform, and I am a good deal disturbed by an impression left by it on my mind to the effect that there was genuine doubt in many quarters as to the spirit in which I personally was inclined to approach the problem. Naturally I am not able at this stage to speak for the Government of India or for His Majesty's Government, but I can claim to know my own mind, and I should be sorry if you, or indeed any one else, were to be under any misapprehension of the sort of line I shall desire to take. I have never had any doubt that Great Britain ought to be willing to concur at the forthcoming revision of the constitution in arrangements that would give to India the fullest measure of self-government, compatible with adequate provision being made for what I conceive to be such essential points as foreign policy, defence, internal security, the position

20. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/24.

of minorities, and the States. I shall throw all the influecne that I possess into the scale of such an endeavour, and I have never believed that it would be impossible, if we could succeed in recapturing mutual trust, to reach an agreement on these lines. Certainly I do not think that any finer piece of work can be given to any of us than to be allowed to share in such an attempt — and, in spite of every discouragement and misunderstanding of these days, I hold unfalteringly by my personal faith that it can be done.

I have said more than I meant — but I let it go as I have dictated — although when I began I did not desire to do more than to reassure you as precisely as I can as to the object I wish to keep before myself when we come to the point of having to place our constructive proposals before His Majesty's Government.

Your sincerely,

IRWIN

21. To Rao Bahadur Sir Annepu Patro, Kt.

„ Dr. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, K.C.S.I.

„ Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, K.C.I.E., Kt.

„ C.P. Ramaswami Ayyer, K.C.I.E., Kt.

„ A.H. Ghuznavi, Esq., M.L.A.

„ Mian Muhammad Shah Nawaz, C.I.E.

„ Hon'ble Sir Phiroz Sethna, Kt., O.B.E.

„ M.R. Jayakar, Esq., M.L.A.

„ M.A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.

Viceregal Lodge, Simla.

July 28th, 1930.

(Private)

Dear ____________,

I understand from the Secretary of State that there is now little doubt that the Opposition Parties will have representatives at the Round Table Conference and (in view of the interest which I know you take in the subject) I wished to write and tell you privately the reasons for this decision, which may not be officially announced for a few days.

I know that some people criticise the decision on the ground that it is a departure from the letter of the original announcement regarding the Conference, but, having been

21. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

in the counsels of His Majesty's Government from the beginning on this business, I am quite clear in my own mind that their intention had never been to rule out the possibility of members of the Opposition having invited to attend. But quite apart (in view of the conversation we had when you were in Simla) from this, and solely on the merits of the case, I have no doubt that the Indian delegation have far more to gain than to lose by the inclusion of Opposition Parties. For there is no departure from the basic character of the Conference, since the constitutional responsibility for coming to a decision upon whatever measure of agreement may be reached and for subsequently presenting proposals to Parliament will still rest upon His Majesty's Government. On the other hand, the inclusion of Opposition leaders will give the Indian delegation a direct and most valuable opportunity of presenting their case personally, and I have ample confidence in the ability of those who will speak for India to state their case. I feel quite sure that, if I had never come to India and was still a member of the Conservative Party in England, I should have been far more likely to be convinced across the Conference table about the strength of India's case than by anything I might have heard outside the closed doors of the Conference or later when the Bill came before

Parliament. If there is to be a difference of opinion between Government and the Opposition over the major problem, it is better to have it out at once, and, if Conservative opinion is not consolidated now, it is only likely to be all the more hardened by the time a Bill comes before Parliament. Moreover, to leave the Opposition outside the closed doors of the Conference room would only breed suspicion among them, and would be likely to make bad trouble later.

These are only a few of the considerations which seem to me relevant, but I thought I would like to make my own mind clear to you in view of the opinion which I know is held by a good many people out here.

Yours sincerely,

IRWIN

P.S.

I have just heard that the matter is settled and that an announcement is to be made in Parliament tomorrow.

IRWIN

22. To M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Viceregal Lodge, Simla.
August 11th, 1930.

(Private)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you very much for your letter of 6th August. Having discussed the question of including Opposition Parties in the Conference when you were in Simla, I was afraid that the decision was not one with which you would readily agree. I am glad, however, that you take it philosophically.

As regards my going to London for the Conference, I have thought over what you said to me when I saw you here. But I fear there is little chance of things falling out in the way you hoped for. Even if the suggestions were made—and I clearly am not the person to make it—there are objections that seem insuperable. The statutory difficulty alone would be a very serious obstacle. But I very much doubt whether, as things are, it would be possible in any circumstances for me to leave India in the next month or two. The Congress Working Committee do not make

22. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

things any easier by the provocative attitude they have adopted during the last week or two. They seem deliberately to ignore the efforts we have been trying to make towards peace, and are clearly out to wreck the chances of any success in that direction. I should also expect that during the Conference frequent reference would be necessary to the Government of India, and I should wish to have the opportunity of influencing their views.

Thank you very much for your suggestions about the representation of the North-West Frontier Province at the Conference, a matter on which I have not yet been able definitely to make up my mind. I only know the people you mention by name, but I will talk the question over further with those who know.

Yours sincerely,

IRWIN

23. To M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Viceregal Lodge, Simla.
August 23rd, 1930.

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Many thanks for your letter of 19th August. As regards the invitation to the Conference, I hope to approach those concerned next week privately, but I cannot at the moment say precisely when it will be possible to announce all the names. Meanwhile, for your own information, I may tell you that I have just heard from the Secretary of State to say that the work of the Imperial Conference is likely to be rather heavier than was expected, owing I suppose to the way in which these questions have come to the front in England in connection with unemployment, and that he would not anticipate that it would be possible to begin the Indian Conference before the second week of November at the earliest. You will remember that it has always been anticipated that, though Indian delegates might collect in London by the 20th of October, the Imperial Conference would not by then have concluded its labours, so I do not know that the present date contemplated for beginning the Indian Conference is any later than had in fact always

23. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

been probable. But it means that those who go would be in plenty of time if they reached London by the 25th of October or the 1st of November.

I have had a long talk to Jayakar, and expect to see him again with Sapru on Monday. Meanwhile you may feel quite sure that I shall avoid the dangers, so far as I am concerned, that you refer to in your letter in this regard.

I shall be very glad indeed to write to one or two people in England whom I should wish you to meet. I will certainly write to Baldwin. Let me know if there are any others that occur to you or if you leave it to me to make a selection. You met Lord Hailsham when he was out here, and you no doubt know Lord Peel. I think it would be useful for you to meet one or two of the younger men such as Ormsby-Gore and Major Oliver Stanley, but let me know about this and when you definitely sail.

Yours sincerely,

IRWIN

24. To M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay.

Viceregal Lodge, Simla.
September 1st, 1930.

(Private)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you very much for your letter of 29th August. I am sorry that you have had to hold your balance in suspense because of the various uncertainties in the present position. I have heard no more from the Secretary of State since I wrote to you on 23rd August, but when I saw in the telegrams this morning that there were press rumours at home regarding a possible General Election in November I telegraphed at once to the Secretary of State to ascertain whether there was any truth in this. I can hardly suppose that there is in that form, but I thought it best to make quite certain, and I will let you know as soon as I get the Secretary of State's reply.

In the meantime I am asking Governors to sound all those whom His Majesty's Government would propose to

24. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

invite, and I hope that by about the end of this week I shall have received all their replies and shall be able to publish the list of names. I will do this as soon as I possibly can.

I appreciate the force of what you say regarding the disturbing effect which is caused in the public mind by uncertainty as to the outcome of Sapru's and Jayakar's recent talks with the Congress leaders. As you will have seen they have been continuing those talks since they left Simla, but I do not think that they were very sanguine of success. The matter is, as you know well enough, delicate; but I anticipate that it may be necessary shortly to publish a statement, which will make the position of the Government clear. I will also consider the question of making some sort of announcement about the same time regarding the probable date of the first session of the Conference, *viz.*, about the second week of November.

I am writing direct to Mr. Baldwin, Sir Samuel Hoare, the Secretary of State (and asking him to arrange with the Prime Minister for a talk to you), Mr. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., and Colonel Spender-Clay, M.P., telling them of your prospective arrival, and asking them to take an oppor-

tunity of seeing you. You know plenty of others, such as Lord Peel, Lord Hailsham, *etc.*

Yours sincerely,

IRWIN

25. Private Secretary to Viceroy to M.A. Jinnah, Esq.

Telgeram, En clair, 4th September, 1930.

Reference His Excellency's letter

September 1st. There is no foundation for rumours that Conference is to be postponed.

25. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

26. Viceroy to M.A. Jinnah, Esq., Mount Pleasant Road, Malabar Hill, Bombay.

Telegram, 13th September, 1930.

No. 211-G.T. Thank you very much for your letter of 9th. I have written by this mail to all the people I mentioned in my letter of 1st September. Will you get in touch with them when you reach London?

26. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

27. To M. A. Jinnah, Esq., M.L.A.,
Bombay.

Viceregal Lodge, Simla.
September 15th, 1930.

(Private)

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 9th. I wrote by yesterday's air mail to the Secretary of State, Mr. Baldwin, Sir Samuel Hoare, Colonel Spender-Clay and Mr. Ormsby-Gore saying that I hope they would see something of you while you are in London. I also asked the Secretary of State to try and arrange for you to have a talk with the Prime Minister. He will be a busy man while you are there, but I have no doubt he will make every effort to find time for a talk. Will you therefore get in touch with the people I have named as soon as you reach London?

I hope you will have a good voyage to England and a very successful time at the Conference. I will watch the daily reports from London with the greatest interest and shall often think of you all.

Yours sincerely,

IRWIN

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27. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/25.

28.

To

1. The Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin, M.P.
2. The Rt. Hon. Sir Samuel Hoare, M.P.
3. The Rt. Hon. W.G.A.Ormsby-Gore, M.P.
4. Lt. Col. The Rt. Hon. H. Spender-Clay, M.P.

Viceregal Lodge, Simla.
13th September, 1930.

My dear _______________,

Mr. M.A. Jinnah, whom you no doubt know very well by name, is going to England next month for the Round Table Conference. When I saw him a short time ago in Simla he asked if I thought it would be possible for you to spare time to have talk to him. I took it upon myself to say that I was sure you would do your best and I hope you will be able to do so. I have seen a good deal of Jinnah from time to time, and have met very few Indians with a more acute intellect or a more independent outlook—not of course that he always sees eye to eye with Government! But he is not lacking in moral courage, has been very outspoken against civil disobedience and

28. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/19.

is genuinely anxious to find the way to settlement. I am sure you would find it interesting to have a talk to him, and it would do Jinnah himself a world of good to meet a few people like yourself.

Your sincerely,

IRWIN

29. Viceregal Lodge, Simla.
13 September, 1930.

My Dear Benn,

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....

Jinnah is going to England next month for the Round Table Conference. When I saw him a short time ago in Simla he asked if I thought it would be possible for you to spare time to have a talk to him. I took it upon myself to say that I was sure you would do your best, and I hope you will be able to do so. I have seen a good deal of Jinnah from time to time, and have met very few Indians with a more acute intellect or a more independent outlook—not of course that he always sees eye to eye with Government. But he is not lacking in moral courage, has been very outspoken against civil disobedience and is genuinely anxious to find the way to settlement. I am sure you would find it interesting to have a talk to him, and it would do Jinnah himself a world of good to meet a few people like yourself.

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29. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/6.

He is also very anxious to be allowed an interview with the Prime Minister. Do you think this could be arranged? I am afraid it will be at a very busy time for you all, but Indians so greatly appreciate things like this that I hope you may be able to manage it. And I think he is out to help.

. . . .

. . . .

Yours sincerely,

IRWIN.

Mr. Wedgwood Benn,
Secretary of State for India.

30. Viceroy to Secretary of State, Telegram, 16th July, 1930.

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I saw Jinnah this afternoon who was greatly disturbed at reports in papers of any decision being made and announced now about Opposition parties being formally associated with Conference. In his own words he thought any such action would be disastrous, thought he fully appreciated necessity of carrying them along. He thought it would not be impossible to get this effected with general consent when they get to London, but I am certain that on immediate point he represents what would be general view now.

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30. *Halifax Collection*, India Office Library, MSS. Eur. C. 152/11.

31. Secretrary of State to Viceroy, Telegrams, 24th July, 1930.

Private & Personal. Following message from Jinnah, dated Bombay, July 19th, has been received by Prime Minister :-

Begins. Inclusion of representatives of Opposition disastrous. Please do not agree. Ends.

Following reply from Prime Minister was sent yesterday for delivery by Private Secretary, Governor of Bombay :-

Begins. Thanks for cable. Believe me doing our best in India's interests. Ends.

31. Ibid., MSS. Eur. C. 152/11.

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